

Applicant: Griffin
Serial No.: 10/802,347
Filed: 03/17/2004
Title: COMPACT FOLDABLE RAMP
Examiner: Addi
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IN THE SPECIFICATION

1. Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 3, beginning "Each upper section 12u ... " as follows:

Each upper section 12u is dimensioned slightly smaller than its next lower adjacent section 12l both longitudinally and transversely such that upon folding the upper section 12u with its runway 16, panels, 17, end members 18 and strengthening ribs 20 is nested within the lower section 12l. For ease of description, each section above an adjacent section is deemed to be smaller than its adjacent lower section. However, it should be understood that it is deemed equivalent to have a lower section smaller than and folding into a larger adjacent upper section. Also, it is understood that use of terms such "nesting" and "fitting within" and other similar terms are meant to convey a smaller section fitting within the another section into which it nests; that is between the lateral side panels and ~~longitudinal~~ end members 18 and in close face-to-face opposition to the underside of each section runway. It does not necessarily require that those side panels and/or end members extend from the respective runways beyond an inner section nested within. For ease of description, sections may be designated numerically, such as first section, second section, third section, and fourth section etc. This nomenclature is for convenience of description only and should not be construed as limiting the number of sections.

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2. Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on page 6, line 17 beginning "The ramp sections 12 ..." as follows:

The ramp sections 12 open fully to an operational mode with adjacent section longitudinal end members 18 abutting, inherently preventing adjacent sections from opening beyond 180 degrees. Section end members 18 are disposed transversely on adjacent ramp section longitudinal ends fold from runway 16 at less than 90 degrees from runway 16, each end member with an abutting surface 19 facing outward from its respective section end with its normal (line perpendicular to its face) longitudinal with the ramp, the runway ending at the end members 18, so that end members 18 of adjacent sections 12u and 12l abut longitudinally face to face with their respective runways meeting at less than 180 degrees creating an arc along the ramp runway. Thus, under load the ramp section end members 18 abut under compressive forces, urging them together with stability increasing under increasing load.

3. Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 3 beginning "The ramp sections 18 ..." as follows:

The ramp sections 18 are strengthened by the side panels 17 (shown in FIG. 8-11) depending vertically downward from the section runway 16 along each section lateral side 22 and longitudinal strengthening ribs 20 running longitudinally between

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section longitudinal ends 24, between and parallel to side panels 17 and terminating in longitudinal abutment with said end members. Shallow transverse strengthening ribs 26 extend between panels 17 and longitudinal strengthening ribs 20 and between pairs of strengthening ribs 20.

4. Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 10 beginning "Turning to the hinges 30 ..." as follows:

Turning to the hinges 30 and referring primarily to FIG. 1 and FIG. 12, it is helpful to describe the hinge configuration in relation to upper and lower adjacent sections 12u and 12l. It has been described that for each pair of adjacent sections, one will be smaller than the other so that the smaller can nest within the larger. Consistent with the assumed nomenclature herein, in describing the hinge 30, the smaller adjacent section will be referred to as the upper section 12u and the larger adjacent section will be referred to as the lower section 12l. Similarly, an upper element will indicate in the direction of the smaller section and a lower element will indicate in the direction of the larger element. Continuing, hinge ears 32 on lower ends 34 of each of the side panels 17 and lower ends 36 of the longitudinal strengthening ribs 20 (except the last or lowest section) extend below and beyond an upper section 12u reaching under the adjacent lower section 12l. A hinge plate 36 extends vertically downward under the runway lower surface 16a of the lower section

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12l inward from a lower section end member 18 on a lower section first end 38, that is, longitudinally between the section end members at an upper end of said lower section. A hinge bar 40 passes through a hinge plate hole 42 aligned with a hole 44 in the hinge ear ears 32 on the ribs 20 below the ribs 20 of the lower section 12l and on each section lateral side 22 forming the hinge 30 between the adjacent upper and lower sections 12u and 12l, longitudinally. Thus, when the upper section 12u pivots on the hinge 30, it folds fully under the adjacent lower section 12l, inward of the lower section end member 18.

5. Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on page 11, line 6 beginning "As shown in FIG. 14,..." as follows:

As shown in FIG. 14, the sections may comprise ~~inverted-open~~ boxes 70 open at their bottoms as section components. With the end member 18 comprising a plurality of end member portions, longitudinal ~~Longitudinal~~-ends 72 of boxes 70 collectively comprise ~~an a~~ section end portion ~~members 18~~ 73 bridging adjacent lateral sides therein closing each box circumference. Section tops 15 comprise a plurality of segments 71 that respectively are box tops. Outer lateral sides 74 of outer boxes 70o comprise section panels 17. Inner lateral sides 76 of boxes 70 ~~form~~ comprise section longitudinal strengthening ribs 20. With the boxes 70 spaced apart

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by spacers 12d they form section slots 60. When assembled together without
spacers, adjacent box sides together form a single longitudinal rib 20.